**Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres in West Bengal**

3372. SHRI S. K. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any scheme to establish Agri-clinics and Agri-business Centres in West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Scheme "Establishment of Agri-Clinics & Agri-Business Centres (ACABC)" was launched in April, 2002 by the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation. The objective of the scheme is to provide extension and other services to farmers on payment basis through economically viable self employment ventures. The selected agriculture graduates are provided agri-preneurship training for a period of two months in identified Nodal Training Institutions, which also provide handholding support to the trained graduates in setting-up of their self-employment ventures.

This Scheme is under implementation in West Bengal, where 236 agri-graduates have so far been trained at two training institutes *viz.* (i) Bidhan Chandra Krishi Vishwavidyalaya, Mohanpur, Nadia, and (ii) Netaji Subhash Regional Institute of Cooperative Management, Kalyani, Ending Nov, 05, 156 & 80 candidates have been trained at these institutes respectively. Of which, 49 have set up such ventures.

(c) Does not arise.

**Growth rate of Agriculture**

3373. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN:
SHRI SURENDRA LATH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for growth of agriculture during each of the last 3 years;

(b) the actual growth rate achieved during each of the last 3 years;

(c) the reasons for decline in growth rate of agriculture, if any; and

(d) whether any steps are proposed to be taken to boost the growth rate of agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The actual growth rates vis-a-vis growth targets set by the Planning Commission for the agriculture including allied sectors of forestry, logging and fishery during the last 3 years of the Xth Plan Period are given below:

| Year | Growth target | Actual growth rates |
|---|---|---|
| 2002-03 | 3.5% | -7.0% |
| 2003-04 | 3.7% | 9.6% |
| 2004-05 | 4.0% | 1.1% |

Source: (i) Central Statistical Organization.

(ii) Mid-Term Appraisal of Xth Five Year Plan, Planning Commission.

(c) The year 2002-03, the first year of the Tenth Plan, witnessed the sharp decline in agricultural growth by (-) 7.0 per cent due to severe drought that affected several States/regions of the country. On the contrary, the agriculture growth during the year 2003-04, the second year of the Tenth Plan, was pushed up to 9.6 per cent owing to favourable rainfall. However, the growth rate during 2004-05 was only 1.1 percent as a result of deficient rainfall from the south-west monsoon.

(d) The Government have initiated various measures through a multi-pronged strategy to give a boost to the production and productivity in the agriculture sector. The strategies formulated by the Government involve making the agriculture sector more vibrant and dynamic and include (i) enhancing institutional credit flow to the farmers and strengthening of cooperative credit structure, (ii) ensuring the timely availability of quality inputs, (iii) promoting farmer-friendly, demand-driven agriculture extension system, (iv) accelerating diversification to high value crops including horticulture, (v) strengthening infrastructure and supply chain, (vi) optimizing

efficient utilization of available water resources through micro-irrigation and enhancing the sustainability of dry-land/rainfed farming system, (vii) reforming agricultural markets and widespread use of post-harvest technology, (viii) putting in place a broader spectrum of risk management apparatus for farmers such as crop insurance and (ix) providing financial support to encourage them to use tractors and power-driven equipment, plant protection equipments for improved efficiency and higher productivity.

**Insurance claim cases with FISHCOPFED**

3374.DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 249 cases of insurance claims covering the fishermen of Andhra Pradesh are pending with FISHCOPFED, New Delhi since 1997-98;

(b) the reasons for this pendency; and

(c) by when all the cases will be settled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (c) The National Federation of Fishermen's Cooperatives (FISHCOPFED) in liaison with the participating state Governments and the Insurance Company implement the Group Accident Insurance for Active Fishermen component of the Centrally Sponsored National Scheme of Welfare of Fishermen. The Insurance Company settles the insurance claims of fishermen of various tates including Andhra Pradesh received through FISHCOPFED. No insurance claim of fishermen of Andhra Pradesh as such is pending with the FISHCOPFED. Among others, one of the main reasons for pendency, if any, is lack of supporting documents submitted along with claims. However, during 1997-98 to 2005-06 (till 16-12-2005), 495 insurance claims of fishermen of Andhra Pradesh state involving financial implication of Fs. 1,97,65,000 have been settled by the FISHCOPFED through the Insurance Companies.